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COCHIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION, 1118

Monday, *the* *8th February 1943* / *26th Makaram 1118*

The Council met in the Council Hall, Ernakulam, at eleven of the Clock with the Hon'ble the President (A. F. W. DIXON Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S.,) in the Chair.

Messrs. Popatlal Goverdhan Lalan, M. K. Devassy and L. M. Pylee were absent.

Swearing in

The following members were sworn in.—

1. Mr. M. M. Paul
2. Mrs. K. Joshua
3. Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan
4. Mr. M. Krishna Menon
5. Mr. K. Narayana Menon
6. Mr. Ephraim Joseph
7. Mr. K. Kunjirama Menon
8. Mr. K. T. Achyuthan
9. Mr. P. P. Devassy
10. Mr. Kunjipalu Thoman Alapad

Welcome Speech by President

I would like to take this opportunity of extending a hearty welcome to the many new members taking their seats for the first time today. I will also take this opportunity of offering a few remarks on the food situation.

The all India rice position, so far as is known, is not very unsatisfactory, but the problem of the equitable distribution of available supplies has not, as yet, been fully solved. If the principle of equality of sacrifice in the matter of food in war time, which is generally accepted in theory, were fully carried out in practice, Travancore and Cochin would be in a far better position than they are today. As it is, despite all the efforts made, hopes raised and even promises received, we have not yet succeeded in securing actual imports of stocks into the two States from other parts of India in nearly sufficient quantities, to bring our position up to the all India average level of comparatively slight deficiency in rice. The difficulties have been immense. Madras unexpectedly was unable to supply nearly as much rice as was at first anticipated, and much of the rice promised from other Provinces failed to arrive for causes quite beyond our control. Despite all possible efforts, the amount actually received into the two States since Madras placed an embargo on exports on July 1st 1942 has been far below our minimum requirements.

I am attending another Food Conference in New Delhi shortly as joint representative of the two States, and will, I can assure the Hon'ble Members, again do all in my power to achieve the object in view, which is to secure for these States in actual receipts a fair and equitable share of all India food crops, to make up for our grave deficiency due to the loss of Burma. I used the words food crops and not rice crop, because, while I believe that it should be possible by equitable distribution throughout India to meet our reasonable requirements in rice, yet, should this prove really impossible, our people would have to be prepared to accept, in addition to whatever rice could be spared, dry grains to make up the deficiency. We would modify our diet accordingly, for, we must be and we shall be fed.

So far as the present situation is concerned, as Hon'ble Members are aware, unexpected delays and disappointments in the receipts of quotas resulted in a position arising, which demanded drastic action. Accordingly, arrangements have been made to purchase locally grown paddy crops, leaving with the cultivators only what they require for their own needs up to the next harvest and also to ration those without paddy crops throughout the State. Grain purchase is proceeding steadily and rationing has already been introduced in Ernakulam, Mattancheri and Trichur town, and in Cochin-Kanayannur taluk. The ration is necessarily austere, and it will not be possible to increase it unless the stock position improves considerably. Government will strain every nerve to improve that position. Cultivators on their part can help by coming forward willingly and selling to Government promptly every grain of paddy not essential for their own needs, and by endeavouring to grow as much food as possible.

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